

TEAM REINTEGRATION RESOURCES

SUPPORTING YOUR TEAM THROUGH FALL TRANSITION

Many leaders are considering how best to navigate the fall transition to the next phase of [BC's restart plan](#) and [UVic's return to campus](#). Understandably, many are anticipating that this will have its challenges and are looking for ways to support people coming back together as they plan their regular services and programs. Whether your team worked remotely, hybrid, stayed on campus, went through layoffs, or something else, all employees have experienced several changes and disruptions to their concept of “normal” and will have to shift again to embrace the next normal. In order to listen and acknowledge the emotional weight our diverse experiences have added to our lives as we also practically plan the logistics of the fall, HR has prepared this resource guide to support you in leading your own team through some reintegration conversations.

HELPFUL MINDSETS

Talking vs. Training: while some education and skills may need to be refreshed (visit [learning central](#) for a list of upcoming courses), teams are more likely to benefit from discussions about the changes involved in returning to on-campus activities, rather than topical training. Try holding individual and team meetings to allow people to share their experiences, anticipate return to campus concerns, and learning from each other in order to move forward in a good way.

Process vs. Perfection: Planning is necessary, but no plan will be perfect enough to avoid some of the messiness and chaos that transition will bring. No matter how organized, emotionally intelligent, trauma-informed, or mindful you or your team are, transition will be a tricky time that may feel uncomfortable. Adopt a posture than [holds uncertainty](#) and doesn't shy away from difficult conversations, without expecting a plan or policy to be a magical fix. When you do plan, try to focus on the logistical fixes, rather than emotional ones.

Effective vs. Efficient: Relearning work norms, adjusting to in-person interruptions, and sorting out routines all take time and the increase in client, colleague and student interactions may be overwhelming. Have grace as tasks may take longer to accomplish. This may feel less efficient in the moment but will be part of your team's effectiveness and is essential to re-establishing connection to people and place.

Normalizing vs. Resolving: Stress shows up in many forms and will likely channel itself to wherever there seems to be the most responsiveness (eg. Many anxieties around return to campus are manifesting as tension around remote working arrangements, changes to office space or new business processes). Rather than trying to resolve all of the points that are causing tension, start by recognizing that it's ALL normal right now: over-performing or under-performing, hesitating or rushing, concern over specific policies, various forms of physical and mental illness, seemingly escalating minor conflicts, etc. Responses to common experiences may vary quite a lot. This is why [Every Pace Needs Grace](#).

A MAP FOR YOUR FIRST MEETING(S)

The number of meetings, length of meetings, and activity choices are all up to you, but we recommend that you devote some intentional team time to discussions and/or activities around the following 4 topic areas: Reconnection, Transition, Norms, and Future Planning.

TOPIC	HOW THIS MIGHT LOOK/SOUND	RESOURCES / REFLECTIONS
<p>RECONNECTION</p> <p>Be sure to make time for celebration and relationship building. This means creating space to connect with each other as a team, and/or a time to connect with other individuals and teams returning to campus connecting to others as they return to campus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Something explicitly celebratory (a party) ▫ Time built into your next several meetings for checking in ▫ A special time or token of appreciation (from the right people) for how the pandemic was managed and acknowledgement of its impact ▫ Team building activities, games ▫ Build in extra time between meetings so people have the space to “bump into” others on campus and reconnect ▫ A team “field trip” to a favourite on-campus location ▫ Some intentional one-on-ones between team members ▫ A Kudos Board or Thank You Card campaign ▫ Social meet-ups with other departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review the Manager support tool kit - Supporting teams drop down menu which gives many activities, articles and resources for leading, reconvening and building trust. ● Check out the Recognition Toolkit and cards, specifically pages 11-15 for ideas about celebrating, recognizing and appreciating your colleagues. ● Video (10 Min): 3 Steps to Turn Everyday get-togethers into transformative gatherings – Priya Parker on customizing meetings for your team’s unique needs. <p>Questions to Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What has changed in your life that you want your teammates to know about? ● What was something you wanted to share with your team members about the past year that maybe didn’t seem important enough to share online? ● Who do you want to give thanks or kudos to? ● What have you missed most about being together?

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<p>TRANSITION</p> <p>Whether or not change is good, transition is always hard. You will automatically discuss the logistics of change, but be sure not to miss the emotional impact that goes along with it. Each team will have its own comfort level with how deep these conversations might go. Make sure you take time as a team to acknowledge the change cycle which includes the grief and stress associated with the current and recent changes AND the opportunities and excitement they can present.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Review UVic’s supports available for Health and Wellness ▫ Ask the team to share their favourite tips and tricks for maintaining resilience ▫ Review a theory or model of change together as a team and discuss where each member is at in the cycle ▫ Host a check-in around one or more of the reflection questions (resist the urge to problem solve) ▫ Watch/listen to a video or podcast episode about change and debrief together ▫ As a group create a chart of how change stress is showing up at work for each person – discuss what the rest of the team can best do to be supportive for each member in a moment of stress (if you have done a Lumina session as a team, this can be a revisit of your Overextensions conversation) ▫ Acknowledge that some team members may have experienced grief and loss they are not ready to talk about, and provide appropriate support and empathy to those individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UVic’s Resources for Health and Wellness • Dr. Rick Cotton’s Developing Personal Resilience course • Podcast (19 min): “Re-entry sucks” Patrick Lencioni’s on why transition is hard and how to come back together • Video (3 min): Growing our Life Around Grief • Article Bridges Transition Model • Article Change Curve • Video (10 min) How changing your mindset can help you embrace change Manu Shahi who helps people reinvent themselves and navigate the four stages of change. • Book “Building Resilience with Appreciative Inquiry: A Leadership Journey through Hope, Despair, and Forgiveness” 2018 by Joan McArthur-Blair and Jeanie Cockell <p>Questions to Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is something that has been hard about the past season? • What has been the best part of the last 1.5 years? • What were some of the unexpected gifts of the pandemic season? • What will you miss most about this time? • What are you most nervous about moving forward? • What are you most looking forward to? • How might we (your team) know if you are stressed and what would you need from us to support you?

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<p>NORMS</p> <p>The written and unwritten social rules of work have changed – as has our ability to do those things on autopilot at the individual, team, and campus level. Also, some team members may have forgotten our in-office habits, while others may have onboarded virtually. Take time to get clear about what behaviours we will intentionally carry forward and which ones may need to change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Review any existing team practices and/or documentation (charters, policies, values, charters, meeting agendas, policies, procedures) and together explore which norms need to be articulated, carried forward, or shifted. ▫ Make time to discuss agreements about workplace housekeeping and administration as practices and preferences may have shifted during the past year (office noise, fragrance policy, temperature/climate control, kitchen duties). ▫ Assign a buddy system for employees who onboarded during the pandemic so they know who to turn to when they have questions about in-office practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review Team Norms Checklist ● Review Resources for New Employees ● Watch (15 min): Getting Along Mini-Series HR created videos centred around what we each can do to get along better with our colleagues. Each episode tackles a common workplace relationship issue and introduces a concept or model that can be useful for reflecting and proceeding more mindfully. <p>Questions to Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What new team norms & agreements do we need to create now we are back to on-campus activities? ● What team norms & agreements did we create over the past 12-18 months that we want to maintain? ● What team norms & agreements did we previously have that we no longer need? ● How can we be intentional in developing and communicating new team norms? ● How will we ensure new team members understand our team norms?

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<p>FUTURE PLANNING (WHAT'S NEXT?)</p> <p>Plan for what's next, both in terms of the vision/excitement about what's possible in a post-pandemic future, but also the practical logistics and priorities about what will be focused on now that we are moving forward</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Set up some strategy meetings to discuss your team's work plans, and work process. ▫ Review the go forward guidelines and town halls available ▫ Schedule your team meetings for the fall and flag and prioritize agenda items ▫ Determine your team's professional development plans so that members can get the training they need ▫ Address Working Remotely decisions and logistics ▫ Use some collaborative planning tools to assess what work you will and won't do moving forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UVic's Return to Campus Support • OHSE Updated Guidelines and return plans • UVic's Working Remotely Resources • UVic's Learning Program • Eco Cycle planning <p>Questions to Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What questions do you still have about on campus safety? - What questions do you still have about working arrangements this fall? - What meetings do we need to schedule/cancel to ensure we are effective as a team? - What training do you/we still need to move forward in a good way? - What conversations still need to happen? - What will we keep and what will we do differently, now that we've experienced this significant shift in home and work life?